

WOMT Summary for May 8, 2012

WOMT met and discussed the following:

The Smelt Working Group agreed that given their present distribution, current salvage, and Delta conditions, risk of entrainment of delta smelt remains low and therefore, the Working Group recommends that no change in operations is necessary to adequately protect delta smelt from entrainment. The Working Group also agreed that given their present distribution, existing constraining conditions was sufficient to protect longfin smelt. The Working Group will continue to monitor smelt salvage, adult and larval smelt survey data, and delta hydrological conditions and will reconvene May 14, 2012, at 10 am.

Currently as of May 8, 2012, the FWS and DFG deem that no additional actions are needed for protection of delta and longfin smelt.

DOSS advises WOMT and NMFS to consider the following proposal for implementation during the third sentinel steelhead experimental study period of May 16–31, 2012: 1) update the assumptions used to calculate the RR Cut trigger with the additional tag detection data collected during the first week of the second experimental study period, expected to result in a trigger value in the low 30s; 2) target an OMR limit of -5,000 cfs for at least May 16–20, even if the RR Cut trigger is met during that period; 3) if the number of tag detections at the RR Cut receivers meets or exceeds the RR Cut trigger, export reductions shall be initiated (but no earlier than May 20) to produce a 5-day running average of the tidally filtered OMR flow of -1,250 cfs, or 1,500 cfs combined exports, whichever is greater; and 4) after 5 days at the most positive OMR (or minimum exports), the projects can return to the experimental OMR flow of -5,000 cfs for the remainder of the period.

NMFS accepts the DOSS advice, and determines on May 11, 2012, that implementing the DOSS proposal above with the Railroad Cut trigger of 31 sentinel steelhead (based on the assumed release group size of 168) will meet the needs of the stipulation study experimental design, adequately protect steelhead, and minimizes the impact to water supply. As such, NMFS finds that the proposal and adjustments will not jeopardize the continued existence of Central Valley steelhead.